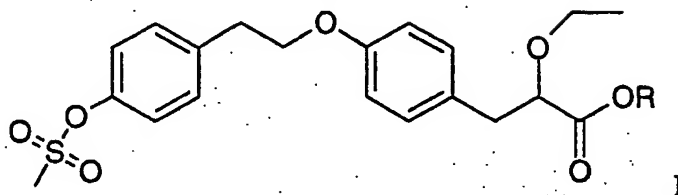
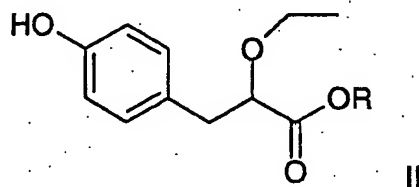


**Claims**

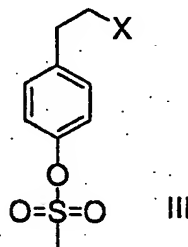
1. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I



5 in which R represents H or an acid protecting group which comprises reacting a compound of formula II

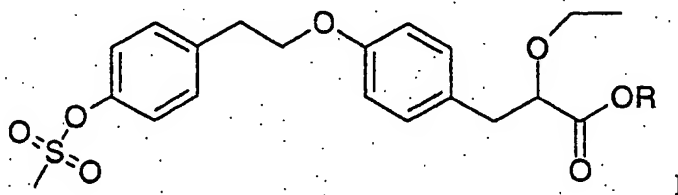


10 in which R is as previously defined with a compound of formula III

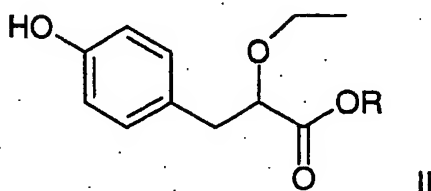


wherein X is a suitable leaving group in the presence of a base and using water as a diluent.

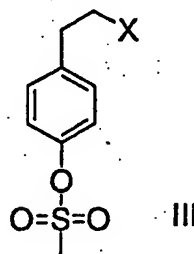
15 2. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I



in which R represents H which comprises reacting a compound of formula II



5 in which R represents an acid protecting group with a compound of formula III



wherein X is a suitable leaving group in the presence of a base and using water as the diluent to give a compound of formula I in which R is an acid protecting group and then removing the  
10 protecting group to give a compound of formula I in which R is H.

3. A process according to claim 2 in which the acid protecting group is removed by hydrolysis.
4. A process according to any preceding claim in which R is H, benzyl or a (1-4C)alkyl group.
- 15 5. A process according to any preceding claim in which X is halo, an optionally substituted phenylsulfonyloxy group or an alkylsulphonyloxy group.
6. A process according to any preceding claim in which the base is selected from carbonates, hydrogen carbonates or hydroxides of alkali metals.
7. A process according to any preceding claim in which the compound of formula I is the S  
20 enantiomer.